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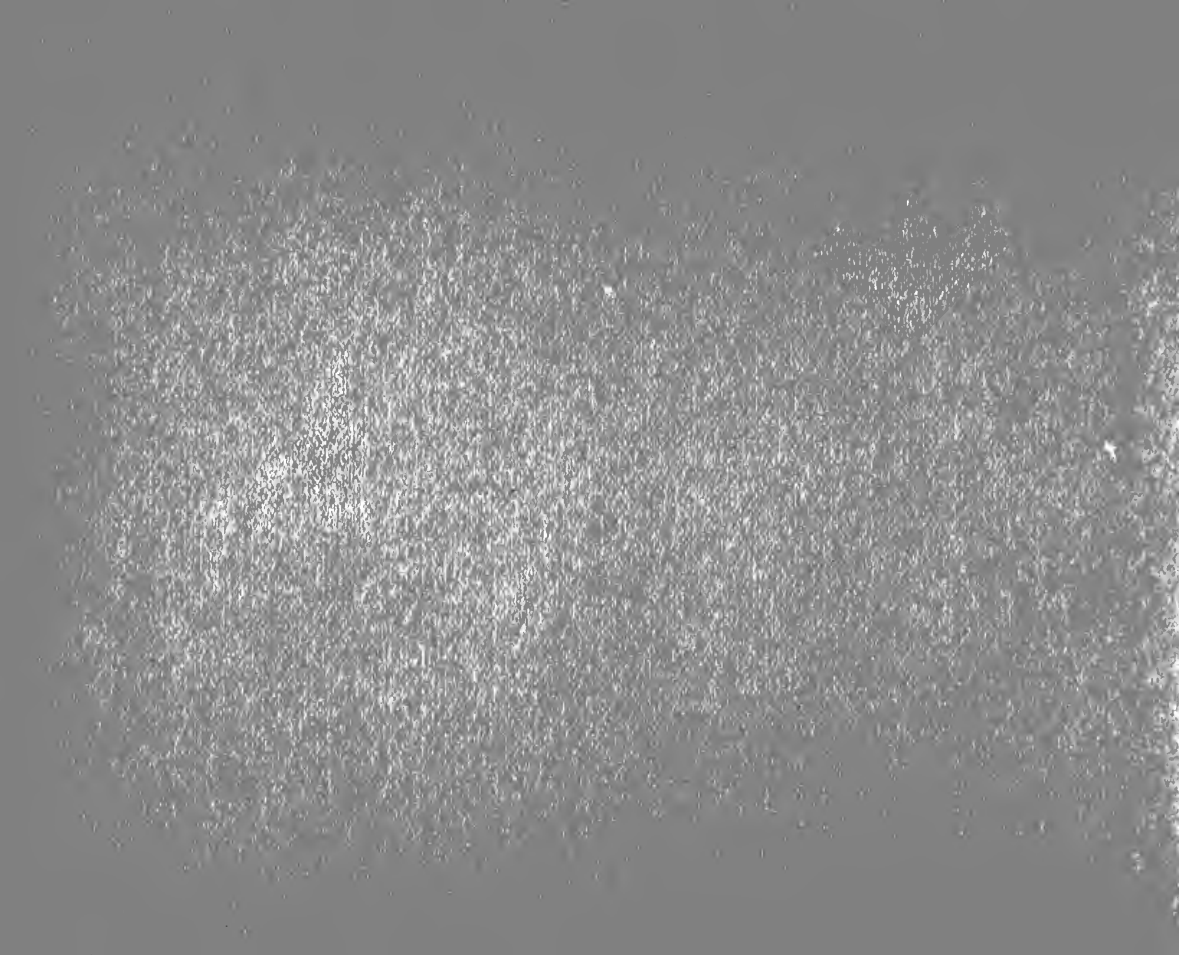
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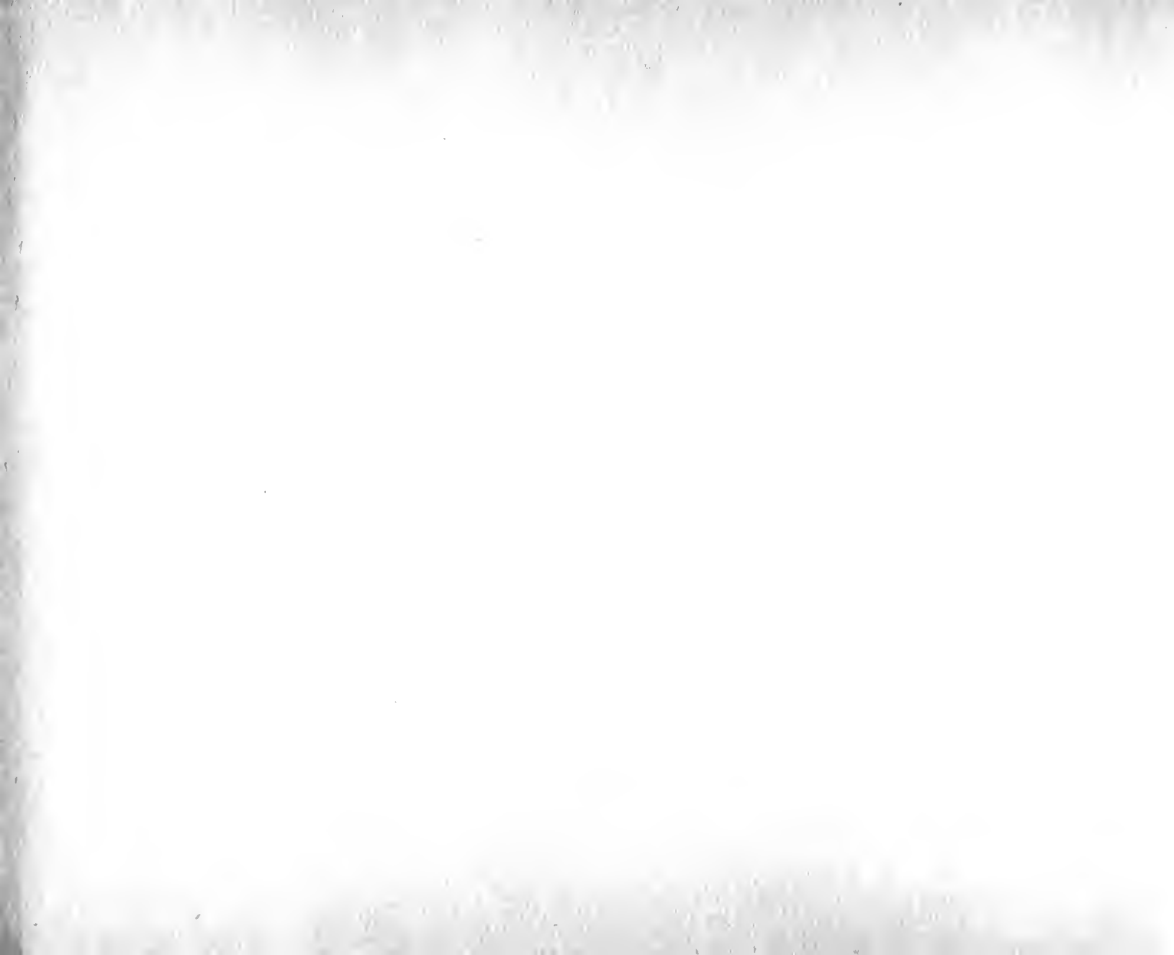
1913

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Pearls and Flowers
Verse









PEARLS AND FLOWERS

and

OTHER VERSE

by



JOHN HUBERT VALENTINE

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PEARLS AND FLOWERS

Bright eyes thru the window were peeping at dawn,
And lips like rose petals had parted to yawn;
But on the fair brow, I am sorry to say,
Had settled a frown that was loath to go 'way.

"I don't see the reason," cried this little lass,
"Why I can't have pearls," glancing out o'er the grass.
And, lo! she saw scattered all over the place,
The brightest of pearls and the finest of lace.

Yet the frown still remained and darker it grew;
While the rosy lips pouted: "they're nothing but dew;
They are worthless and useless and joy do not give,
And a few hours at most is all that they live.

"What I want is pearls of exorbitant price,
That I may be envied for dressing so nice;
It's a shame I can't have them, any one can see
That they would be very becoming to me."

Now, was it a fairy, what think you, I pray?
That brushed down her eyelids and whisked her away
To a land where sweet flowers abundantly grew,
And the scorching hot sun was just sinking from view.

But, oh, the sad blossoms were wilted and dry,
And hung down so lifeless, 'twould make one most cry;
While their dear, pretty faces were pinched up and grey,
Since rain had not fallen for many a day.

When softly the twilight came creeping along,
Low, soothingly humming a sweet little song;
And then, oh so quiet, like magic, 'tis true,
The flowers were rejoicing and kissing the dew.

The moon had now risen and shed down its light
On a scene over which a queen might delight;
'Twas so lovely, so peaceful, so brilliant and fine,
So sweet in its fragrance, that joy reigned sublime.

And pearls, how they gleamed, large and tiny ones, too,
All scattered profusely around by the dew;
And tho they would last but a very short day,
They cheered and brought comfort till they passed away.

Now you will agree with me, dear one, won't you,
That the worth of a thing is the good it will do?
Not the show it will make, nor the envy 'twill bring,
For they are but vipers with poisonous sting.

While deeds of great kindness short time often take,
And scores may be done for somebody's sake;
The dew pearls, you see, fully realize this,
And not for a moment are they found amiss.

Now was it a fairy that touched her again,
Or just the soft curtain the breeze had blown in?
For the pink lids flew open, the lass hastily dressed,
While joyously humming: "the dew pearls are best."

THE STORY THE WIND TOLD.

What is the wind relating

As it whispers through the leaves?

Why does it sigh so softly

Or moan as it shakes the trees?

Hark! now the breeze grows stronger,

Listen, perhaps we'll hear,

Come, let us cross and be seated

Under that great oak near.

We scurry there in a hurry,
And snuggle close as can be,
Near to the heart as we can get
Of the splendid, mighty tree.

Soon the leaves begin to quiver,
To rustle, and to swing,
As if in great excitement,
A guest they are welcoming.

And such a whispering follows,
Every one joins in the theme.
At times there is great commotion,
Now and then a lingering scream.

For the wind a tale is telling;
We catch not every word,
But we understand as clearly
As if it all we heard.

It tells of the great wide ocean,
Where noble ships a-sail,
Are sometimes wrecked and sunken,
While grand some ride the gale.

It tells of the joy, and sorrow,
Of the right, and of the wrong
It has seen on many occasions,
With feeling deep and strong.

And it tells of brave ones fighting,
Courageous through all strife,
Unconscious of their own grandeur,
On the battle field of life.

Of mean, unprincipled schemers,
And it moans on mentioning them,
Pained, that contemptible creatures,
Should mingle with upright men.

It calms, yet the leaves are trembling,
And soothingly whispers low:
“I was becoming excited,
But you will excuse me, I know.

“For the moment, I had forgotten,
The cockle profuse through the wheat;
And I burned so with indignation,
I fear I assumed a white heat.

“But now, dears, I will be going,
Things we can't help we must bear;
By and by they will be regulated,
And rightly adjusted up there.”

It rose o'er the tree high, and higher,
And carried the dark clouds away;
But I know I shall always remember
The story the wind told today.

A COUNTRY EVENING SLEIGH RIDE.

Sweet, silvery, tinkling sleigh bells,
Dearly I love your sound,
With the click of the horses' flying feet.
Upon the frozen ground.

When the splendor of the moonlight
Shines with radiant glow,
And the stars ablaze with brilliance,
Light the crystals on the snow.

And the trees in soniber grandeur,
Their branches bleak and bare,
Seem whispering to the echoes
Resounding here and there.

As out from the distant woodland,
Near to the lake's hard brink,
A forest monarch, antlered wide
Comes seeking for a drink.

While an owl cries loudly: "Who, who!"

Perched up in the air;

And scurrying in and out of sight,

Leaps now and then a hare.

On, on, to glide warmly wrapped,

Enjoying sights and sounds,

Followed by Major, truest of friends

Wiseest and fleetest of hounds.

O, the joy of such a sleigh ride,
Out in the crisp pure air,
Exhilarates until we cry:
“My, but this world is fair!”

THE LEAVES' GALA DAY.

The raindrops, all glimmering, fell over the roof,

Then quickly they sped down the eaves,

As the wind gaily whistling bore swiftly along

Millions of bright autumn leaves.

Like daintily robed fairies arrayed for a fete,

They fluttered and froliced away,

And danced on the breeze as it carried them off

For a glad and deserved gala day.

The wind softly whispered and smilingly said
To the drops that musically fell:
“O, they should be happy the work they have done
Was finished exceedingly well.

And garbed in their new and magnificent dress,
With me on this frolic all go,
Before they'll assemble in nooks here and there,
To dream 'neath the glistening snow.

But soon they're awakened and then they'll away
When the trumpet of nature calls clear:
"We know!" cried the raindrops, "for that is the time
We join and go with them, too, dear."

Deeply down 'neath the soil we go delving along
To nourish the tender and weak;
Yet a word of fault at their low station
We never have heard the leaves speak.

They do not complain, but just work with a will
Wherever their calling may be,
As the same noble purpose pervades thru their hearts
At the top or the root of the tree.

And when they swing loftily and proud in the air,
Like a sweet benediction will fall
Their shadow, so cooling against the fierce sun,
A blessing to living things all.

But when they dwell lowly deep down in the dark,
 “They toil day and night,” said the shower,
“And up to the light for the good, and the bad,
 Send many an exquisite flower.”

“Ah, yes,” sighed the wind, “what a lesson they teach,
 It’s surprisingly strange why mankind
Don’t notice more closely and profit by it,
 Tho perhaps the poor things are all blind.”

And then in a shuddering whisper it said:

“Raindrops, au revoir I must say;

This subject more deeply again we'll discuss,

Upon the leaves' next gala day.”

GRANDMA'S DREAM.

Snuggled cosily in her rocker,
Her dear old face abeam,
Grandma's thoughts have gone off roaming
In a most delightful dream.
While time with gracious ardor
Has turned and backward sped,
And youth, all fair and beautiful,
Has taken ages' stead.

The woodland buds perfume the air,
The wild rose bloom is sweet,
As childhood friends come hurrying,
This fair young girl to greet;
The grass is growing fresh and green,
The cloudless sky is blue,
And love alights the faces all,
Of dear friends ever true.

The meadow larks in raptures
Are trilling loud and clear,
While hosts of other song birds
Now chorus sweetly near;
A silvery brook, low murmuring,
Goes dancing on its way,
And in its sparkling waters
The brightest sunbeams play.

While Grandma, young and beautiful,
Goes romping on the farm,
To chase the pretty butterflies
Down by the old red barn;
And then upon her pony mounts,
Away they gaily spring,
“Goodby, wild bird!” a dear one calls,
“You’re all day on the wing.”

A dainty kiss from finger tips,
Is wafted on the air,
And off she goes, this sweet wild rose,
With heart so free from care;
Another rider joins her now,
A handsome, dark-haired boy,
And with a merry challenge
To race, they speedily fly.

So after all, 'twas but a dream,
The sorrow and despair
That gave her such an aching heart,
And seemed to bleach her hair;
For life is at its fairest time,
Her hair is glim'ring gold,
And she is young and happy,
Not worn and grey, or old.

And lightly down the way she speeds,
Her curls blown in the breeze,
Her roguish face aglow with smiles,
A witching little tease;
“Farewell,” she cries, “I’ll leave you now,
And Sir, you’re fairly beat!”
Then with the merriest chuckle,
Grandma bounded from her seat.

Amazed, she stood, deep puzzled,
Her brow then grew serene;
“Dear Lord,” she whispered lowly,
“Do I not *now* but *dream*?
It must be I am sleeping,
I pray awaken me,
That I may go rejoicing,
Again in ecstasy.”

SUNSHINE.

Snatch it up, that ray of sunshine,
Stealing thru your half-closed door;
Place the pretty shining treasure
Where it can escape no more.

Down within the deepest recess
Where its glow can ne'er depart,
Till it fills to overflowing,
Every fibre of your heart.

Then, ah then, how glad we'll greet you,
For we'll know you come to cheer;
And our spirits sad, will lighten,
Every moment you are near.

SPEEDERS.

Mercy me! how fast they're flying,
One by one, without abate;
Neither plunging they, or lagging,
None come early, none go late.

Ah, but my, what joy some bring us!
Others try the very soul;
Yet to us they each contribute,
As they swiftly onward roll.

What then shall our gain be counting?

What shall be our saddest loss?

Shall our sheaves with gold be weighted?

Or will they but teem with dross?

Clearly, we have got the choosing

What the harvest full shall be,

And may lose, or gain forever,

Joy throughout eternity.

Do you catch my meaning, brother?

Recognize those speeders great?

They are moments, use them wisely,

Or you may repent too late.

SELF CONFIDENCE.

Don't grumble and grouch and whimper about,
If your roadway is hard, don't shirk,
But throw back your shoulders, roll up your sleeves,
And be willing and proud to work.

Just say to yourself: "I can and I will!"
As each busy day passes by,
"At least keep crawling until I can bound,
I know, sir, because I am I!"

A LITTLE HOUSE.

A little house stood by a river's bank,
Forsaken, wrecked, unpleasing to the eye;
Its door wide open stood, and weeds grew rank,
And crawling things across its sill sped by,
And through its paneless windows bats did fly.
Ah, house of clay! time must such sad change bring,
And void is life, if sit we idly nigh
Alone on pleasure bent; how deep the sting
Of mortal soul, "Too late, too late, all's lost!" to cry.

A COY LITTLE MAIDEN.

I went strolling one morn to the country,
To refresh me and hear the birds sing,
And I met on the road a coy damsel,
A cute little old-fashioned thing.

“It’s a beautiful morning,” I greeted,
And I noted her cheeks turning red,
While her grip seemed to loosen a little,
On the chain of a beast that she led.

“May I walk with you, sweet little maiden?

I’d like company as pretty as you;”

But, before I completed the sentence,

Straight at me the billy-goat flew.

And the next thing I knew I was sprawling,

Far away in the slush, like a toad;

And that coy little maiden was dancing

With joy, by herself on the road.

WHO ARE YOU?

They all sat around the fire shivering,
Chilled to the bone every man,
And huddling up close to get warmer,
Weird tales to relate they began.

They were strangers, going thru the country,
When a storm cloud appearing in sight,
It happened that they congregated
In this dark, vacant house, for the night.

An old stove had been left in the kitchen;
 Soon they had it blazing up fine;
In a cupboard they found some good coffee,
 And boiled it in very short time.

Refreshed, now, they grew very genial,
 In fact they were bubbling with fun,
And all said that a ghost or a goblin,
 From that fire could not make them run.

O, no doubt they felt very courageous,
But things began happening then,
And I'll say that more ardor was never
Demonstrated by so many men.

With the speed of the lightning all bounded
To their feet, their arms scrambling wide,
To grab on the coat of the other,
That behind him he safely might hide.

Such commotion one could not conjecture,
Believe me, I tell you what's true;
While above in the loft something dreadful
Kept querying down: "Who are you?"

No one answered, because, well, he couldn't,
Teeth chattered so he'd lose his tongue;
When, crack! On their heads with a vengeance
Came a blow from a weight that was flung.

“Be the powers!” cried Paddy, the bravest,
“Here’s a ghost with shillalah or brick,
Now it’s me for the tall growing timber,”
And he rushed out the door doubly quick.

The rest, like a band of wild Indians,
With faces so white they looked blue,
Didn’t run—no, they didn’t have time to,
But close behind Paddy they flew.

Not one of them paused for a minute,
Nor looked one a second behind;
On, on, they went farther and farther,
As if they were racing the wind.

While the old house that stood isolated,
Was fast disappearing from view,
And out of the flames wildly fluttered
The owl that inquired: "Who are you?"

The shillalah that cracked their heads neatly,
 Sending Paddy in haste through the door,
Was the stovepipe, now lying disjointed
 In a bent rusty heap on the floor.

As for me—well, I never have wagered,
 Nor on any man's word relied,
No, sir; not at least till his courage
 Has been tested and thoroughly tried.

A COUNTRY HOP.

Fetch along the fiddle, boys,
And resin well the bow;
The bobs are standing ready,
The horses wild to go.

Come, every lad and lassie,
The sleighing is tip top;
Just hurry on your wrappings,
And hasten to the hop.

The road is smooth and glassy,
The moon is shining bright;
We'll dance the reel and hornpipe,
Until the morning light.

Don't fail to take your whistles,
And toot your tin horns loud;
We'll stop at every farm house,
And gather up the crowd.

Hurrah! then for the town hall,
We'll make its four walls ring
With a rattling old brakedown,
Or fancy highland fling.

We'll balance and we'll chassez,
And swing with hearty will,
And promenade together,
In a lively old quadrille.

We'll waltz and double schottische,
And polka round the floor,
Until the day is breaking,
Then beg for one dance more.

While we jolly up the fiddler
With many a shining dime,
And hear the girls and boys say:
"We've had a glorious time."

They may boast about their revel
Or brilliant city ball;
But for pure joy a country hop,
I think, outshines them all.





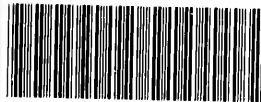


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